

# The Missouri Public Service Commission

*Informed Consumers, Quality Utility Services, and a Dedicated Organization for Missourians in the 21st Century*

## GETTING READY FOR THE HEATING SEASON

*Consumers should be prepared in the event they have to pay higher natural gas heating bills this winter. Natural gas prices are higher than normal for this time of year. These high gas prices will affect winter heating bills because companies will have to pay more for natural gas, including natural gas put into storage to help meet the winter demand.*

### **Take Steps NOW To Get Ready For Winter**



Examine ways to cut down on energy usage. Contact your utility company for home energy audits and suggestions to make homes and businesses more energy efficient. Have the furnace checked and tuned-up, if needed. Replace filters each month if they are dirty.



Identify safe measures to keep homes and businesses energy efficient. Caulk and place weatherstripping on doors and windows that leak air. Add attic insulation if necessary. Contact your utility company, some customers may be eligible for weatherization assistance.



Consumers may want to talk to their local utility company about a "budget" or "level" billing plan. These plans allow customers to pay equal monthly payments on their accounts. In addition, many Missouri gas and electric companies have other programs to assist their customers. In most cases, companies will attempt to be somewhat flexible with customers to avoid disconnections.



Since 1977, the Public Service Commission has required heat-related utility companies to adhere to its Cold Weather Rule, which requires utilities to help customers maintain heat-related service during the winter under certain circumstances. Utilities and the PSC can also provide information on financial assistance programs available to consumers.

### **Facts About Natural Gas Pricing**

The Missouri Public Service Commission has the authority to review how natural gas utilities purchase their gas. The Commission is very limited in what it is authorized to do when natural gas prices go up. Wholesale natural gas prices are determined in an open, competition-based market. The Commission **does not** regulate the price of wholesale natural gas which is sold to the local natural gas company who provides you with the service.

### **For more information**



Created in 1913, the Missouri Public Service Commission (PSC) regulates investor-owned telecommunications, water and sewer, natural gas, electric and steam utilities. The PSC works to ensure that Missouri citizens receive safe, reliable and reasonably priced utility services. If you have an inquiry, billing question or service-related problem that your utility provider cannot answer, please call the PSC at **1-800-392-4211** or visit our website at **[www.psc.mo.gov](http://www.psc.mo.gov)**